

Anonymous User just submitted the survey 'Biodiversity Legislation Review Questionnaire' with the responses below.

**Name**

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**Email address**

[REDACTED]

**Theme 1: Objects and principles for biodiversity conservation**

Check box to view and respond to questions

**Should there be an aspirational goal for biodiversity conservation?**

Yes

**Given available evidence about the value and state of the environment, are the existing legislative objects still valid? Do the current objects align with international and national frameworks, agreements, laws, obligations? If not, what objects are required?**

Yes

**To what extent are the current objects being met?**

More resources, political will and education needed

**Could the objects of the current laws be simplified and integrated? If so, how?**

My sitting down with all stakeholders and making enforceable laws but with incentives for compliance.

**Theme 2: Conservation action**

Check box to view and respond to questions

**Is the current system effective in encouraging landowners to generate public benefits from their land and rewarding them as environmental stewards? Or are current mechanisms too focused on requiring private landowners to protect ecosystem services and biodiversity at their own cost?**

There should be more recognition and benefits in the form of tax concessions to recognise ecosystem services. eg clean water, soil and air, bush fire management (fuel loads, ecological requirements). Less subsidies for fuel to and other activities which cause adverse environmental impacts such as clearing, overburning, soil erosion, weeds, ferals and pollution of all kinds including CO2.

**Are there elements of the current system for private land conservation that raise impediments (for example, binding nature of agreements and potential loss of production) for individuals who want to manage their land for conservation? If so what are they? What incentives might be effective, efficient and equitable in promoting biodiversity conservation on private land?**

Where landholders have entered into private conservation agreements they should be given tax (including sales and capital gains tax) and rate concessions and priority for new funding opportunities. This should be negotiated across all tiers of government and consistent across the various forms of private conservation mechanisms.

**What should be the role of organisations and bodies, such as the Nature Conservation Trust, in facilitating and managing private land conservation through mechanisms such as conservation and biobanking agreements?**

The Nature conservation Trust should be supported in its role. Its revolving fund is a unique mechanism in NSW and should be supported. The NCT covenants should have equal status as the NPWS Volunteer Conservation agreements which have a council rate free exemption. The tax concessions available to the NPWS foundation for donated land should also be available to other organisations.

**How should the government determine priorities for its investment in biodiversity conservation while enabling and encouraging others (e.g. community groups) to contribute to their own biodiversity conservation priorities?**

Undertake comprehensive biodiversity surveys across the large gaps of public land and most private land to identify the true state of biodiversity across the state. Many areas have not ever had a systematic wildlife or flora survey or it is now 20 years since the last one. A comprehensive mapping project across the whole state using digital air photography and 3d technology as done for Coffs Harbour City Council is urgently needed to build a good base for priority planning. This can then be updated by landholders through online applications once the baseline is established. The whole NSW wildlife Atlas needs to be cleaned up and made more accurate and user friendly.

**How can the effectiveness of conservation programs be monitored and evaluated?**

See last answer

**How should any tradeoffs be assessed?**

Tradeoffs or offsets need to be established before a reduction occurs. "No net loss" must be the guiding principle. Offsets must be complementary to ensure no net loss occurs over time or during construction. See answer above

**To what extent is the system forward looking or dealing with legacy impacts?**

Tokenistic at best

**To what extent does current practice (rather than the legislation) determine outcomes?**

Only the government has the resources to undertake surveys to determine this

### **Theme 3: Conservation in land use planning**

Check box to view and respond to questions

#### **How effective are current arrangements at ensuring biodiversity values are identified early and properly considered in strategic planning systems? How can they be improved?**

There is very little reliable baseline data or trained staff involved in planning. This can be improved by employing staff with an ecological background. More data such comprehensive biodiversity surveys across the large gaps of public land and most private land to identify the true state of biodiversity across the state. Many areas have not ever had a systematic wildlife or flora survey or it is now 20 years since the last one. A comprehensive mapping project across the whole state using digital air photography and 3d technology as done for Coffs Harbour City Council is urgently needed to build a good base for priority planning. This can then be updated by landholders through online applications once the baseline is established. The whole NSW wildlife Atlas needs to be cleaned up and made more accurate and user friendly.

#### **How effective are current arrangements for delivering strategic outcomes for biodiversity and enhancing ecosystem services? How can they be improved?**

Ad hoc and under resourced. Stop sacking and isolating the frontline agency staff who have the expertise to make proper decisions. The environmental industry has no standards or regulation. Bullying by developers and corporation is common. Improve and implement the environmental accreditation scheme and make it compulsory. Improve the environmental asset knowledge base.

#### **How should the effectiveness of strategic planning approaches be monitored and evaluated?**

As above

### **Theme 4: Conservation in development approval processes**

Check box to view and respond to questions

#### **To what extent has the current framework created inconsistent assessment processes, environmental standards, offset practices and duplicative rules? What can be done to harmonise processes?**

Some problems of dual consent exist with changes to state and local environmental planning laws and the native vegetation act. This has to be done at a state level with adequate resourcing. It should be done at a local government level but unfortunately this could not happen unless the positions were funded by the state which would create inequities particularly in small councils. Potential for corruption is very high in this area. ICAC seems reluctant to get involved as cases are more poor practice or from bullying rather than for direct financial gain

**Can we have a single, integrated approach to the approval of all forms of development, including agricultural development, that is proportionate to the risks involved? If yes, should one methodology (or a harmonised methodology) be used to assess all impacts? Does a need remain for some differences in assessment approaches?**

Probably too complicated to integrate the very different planning instruments.

**What are the advantages and disadvantages of the different biodiversity assessment methodologies? Are the rules transparent and consistent? Is the way data is used to underpin decisions transparent? Do the assessment methodologies appropriately accommodate social and economic values?**

All forms of assessment are constantly being improved. Part of the perceived lack of transparency is the lack of expert staff to interpret and explain methods and rules to the landholders and practitioners. Very few staff in councils and agencies understand how vegetation mapping was completed or what some laws and regulations are intended for. Conservation assessment should always be undertaken independently of other values first and then potential actions are weighed up with economic and social values. You don't do a medical assessment based on a person's economic and social status. These are considered when prescribing the treatment.

**Does the regulatory system adequately protect listed threatened species, populations and ecological communities? Is there utility in specifically protecting these entities through the regulatory system?**

As stated above there are large problems with the current system. The resourcing and staffing must be adequate to ensure efficient and effective regulation to stop the decline of threatened species coupled with incentives to improve. At present millions of dollars are being spent on the restoration and regeneration of degraded areas at the same time we are still logging oldgrowth forests and clearing and polluting areas which are in good condition.

**Are there other models (international or Australian) that regulate activities impacting on biodiversity that may be relevant to NSW?**

No Answer

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No Answer

**To what extent has the current regulatory system resulted in lost development opportunities and/or prevented innovative land management practices?**

The current regulations are inadequate in the area of using fire as a management tool in native vegetation. Fire can be used as a Routine Agricultural management activities without consent and is resulted in much of the landscape being overburnt and escaped fire. To conduct an ecological burn which will benefit the environment is not well supported by current legislation or the Rural Fire Service. Again activities which degrade the environment are supported and those that protect or improve values restricted.

**Some impacts cannot be offset. What are they? Are these appropriately addressed in approval systems? What is the relevance of social and economic benefits of projects in considering these impacts?**

No Answer

**How can offsets be more strategically located?**

No Answer

**Are there areas currently regulated that would be better left to self-regulatory codes of practice or accreditation schemes?**

Self regulation has failed. This is obvious from the loss of species, land clearing and the degradation of creeks and rivers.

**Theme 5: Wildlife management**

Check box to view and respond to questions

**Have the threats to biodiversity posed by: (a) people taking animals and plants from the wild, (b) feral animals and weeds, and (c) illegally imported species, been effectively managed?**

No there is a large trade in wildlife and plants.

**Has the NPW Act and the supporting policy framework led to a positive change in the welfare of native animals (captive and free-living)? What role if any should the government have in ensuring the welfare of individual native animals – particularly where there are already stand-alone welfare laws such as the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979?**

No Answer

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No Answer

**Are the provisions for marine mammals effective?**

No Answer

**Is the current framework for wildlife licensing, offences and defences, including those applying to threatened species, easily understood? Is the current licensing system too complex? How can it be improved and simplified to focus on conservation outcomes?**

People should be allowed to own native species as pets to replace dogs and cats in bushland areas.

**Is there currently appropriate regulation for the sustainable use and trade of wildlife?**

No there a reptile websites advertising nsw species for sale.

**Theme 6: Information provisions**

Check box to view and respond to questions

**What information should be generated about the different kinds of value (for example, monetary and intrinsic value) of biodiversity and other natural assets in NSW?**

There is very little reliable baseline data or trained staff involved in planning. This can be improved by employing staff with an ecological background. More data such comprehensive biodiversity surveys across the large gaps of public land and most private land to identify the true state of biodiversity across the state. Many areas have not ever had a systematic wildlife or flora survey or it is now 20 years since the last one. A comprehensive mapping project across the whole state using digital air photography and 3d technology as done for Coffs Harbour City Council is urgently needed to build a good base for priority planning. This can then be updated by landholders through online applications once the baseline is established. The whole NSW wildlife Atlas needs to be cleaned up and made more accurate and user friendly.

**What type, quality and frequency of data should be collected about biodiversity? Who should be responsible for such a system?**

Using google earth as background layers should be maintained and moderated by state government but allowing landholders to easily contribute information for verification and inclusion. New technology makes this very feasible.

**Is current data about biodiversity highly credible and readily accessible? If not, how can quality and access be improved?**

No Answer

**How effective is the threatened species listing process (including the listing of key threatening processes) in guiding subsequent conservation action?**

Not sure that the scientific committee has all the necessary data at their fingertips.

**Should threatened species listing decisions be decoupled from decisions on conservation actions (including recovery planning) and regulatory processes?**

No Answer

**To what extent, if any, does having national and state lists of threatened species cause confusion, regulatory burden or duplication of conservation effort? How could national and state lists be rationalised?**

No Answer

**To what extent is the identification of critical habitat an effective tool for biodiversity conservation? Should we list critical habitat for more species where relevant and useful?**

Yes

**Should private conservation data be collected and if so how?**

As stated above

**Other comments**

No Answer